

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY PANEL
MINUTES
April 3-4, 2003

Thursday, April 3:

Members Present

Patti Simcosky
Dennis Gragg
Richard Staley
Eileen Huth

Pam Walls
Kent Kolaga
Mike Hanrahan
Ray Wicks

Lynda Roberts
Melodie Friedebach
Cathy Meyer
Dan Colgan

DESE Staff Present

Debby Parsons

Members Not Present

Pat Jackson
Janet Jacoby
Deana O'Brien
Eric Remelius
Joe Sartorius

Barbara Scheidegger
Dennis Von Allmen
Trish Grassa
Stephen Viola
Steve McDannold

Joan Zavitsky
Sandra Levels
Scott Mantooth

Call to Order/Approval of Minutes - Meeting was called to order by Mike Hanrahan at 1:15 p.m.

There were a couple changes to the minutes suggested. Under the CIMP Update section remove the sections called "Role of Advisory Panel" and "Role of DESE" and instead indicate that "The fact sheet will be prepared by DESE." Also in that same section the minutes should indicate that Mike assigned liaisons for the subcommittees. Kent Kolaga made a motion to accept minutes from last meeting with suggested corrections and Pam Walls seconded. Motion passed.

DESE Report - Melodie Friedebach

Budget/funding issues - Melodie Friedebach indicated that state agencies have had hearings on the house side and DESE came out of the house education committee fine but did have cuts in the public placement portion. The House appropriations committee decided to let state agencies decide where they want to make their cuts. Appropriations would be cut back to the 2001 level. The Senate appropriations hearings started in early April. Senate would like agencies to prepare an impact statement for a 15 percent cut across the board to our GR funded programs. Final recommendations go to the Senate on Monday morning. This is not to say that these are the cuts but Senate would like to see the impact of a 15 percent cut. They may take more or less out of a program, may give DESE some discretion on where cuts are made. This could cause maintenance of effort issues resulting in the possible loss of federal funding.

State Plan Changes Update - DESE has not heard from OSEP on the language changes. DESE will hold public hearings, etc. for these changes once OSEP approval is received. The Panel may want to recommend this topic to one of the Panel's committees for their review and comment. OSEP sent DESE a letter to send to the Missouri legislature indicating DESE's need to have these changes approved.

IDEA Reauthorization - Melodie Friedebach discussed with the Panel the highlights of the proposed Reauthorization (see handout). Binding arbitration - DESE needs to make sure that parents are aware that the results of this process are final. The Show Me Standards could be turned into a checklist type of document (paperwork reduction portion). Melodie handed out and discussed with the Panel a summary of changes to HB 1350 based on the subcommittee markup on April 2, 2003. The entire original bill is linked to the DESE website. Separate bills around school choice and discipline. Could discuss further at the June meeting if needed.

Miscellaneous – Pam Walls requested some geographic data on free and appropriate public education (FAPE) and least restrictive environment (LRE) – where are the different types of disabilities located, race, population, age, etc. The Data Coordination Section is responsible for pulling this type of information. Exceptional Pupil Aid (EPA) is paid by position (depending on number of teachers, aides, etc.). Federal money used to be distributed based on a per child amount. IDEA 97 changed that. It is now based on the general population.

CIMP Update - Debby Parsons (three handouts: members of subcommittees, Roles of Panel – DESE, and letter from OSEP) - DESE received the response from OSEP (see handout). There were two issues of noncompliance for Part B. One in the general supervision section (DESE will address the issue by developing a monitoring standard for this concern) and the other under statewide assessment (OSEP misunderstood the wording on this item-DESE will clarify). The format for the Part C improvement plan will look different from the Part B improvement plan. OSEP indicated that for the Part C improvement plan; DESE could use the same performance report format. DESE asked if the monitoring committee would assist with the wording of the Compliance issues.

CIMP committees on Achievement and Transition will begin next week. GLARRC will assist in drilling down the root causes. Next round of meetings will be the last week of April to zero in on the strategies. DESE will have May and June to finalize the report to OSEP. DESE will be bringing a copy of the report to the June meeting. Debby Parsons handed out a revised list of the roles of the advisory panel, DESE, and the subcommittees. The role of the liaisons is to report the feedback to the Panel. Mike Hanrahan suggested that the liaisons use a summary format when reporting to the Panel.

New Standing Committees - DESE will have staff available to talk to each of the subcommittees.
Rules and Regulations - Richard Staley, Ray Wicks, Dan Colgan
Evaluations - Lynda Roberts and Eileen Huth
Monitoring - Kent Kolaga, Pam Walls, Cathy Meyer
Programs (effective practices) - Dennis Gragg, Patti Simcosky
SIG (one year remaining) Review DESE's response to a couple of the formal recommendations and give suggestions to DESE. Also need to look at the Performance Report and provide feedback.
Nominations committee (Scott Mantooth-chair, Dennis Gragg, Trish Grassa)

One of the duties of the subcommittees is to have them do the “work” of the Panel. These committees could meet at any time (via email, conference call, etc.). The standing committees, if they are meeting and working, could drive the Panel meetings. It will be their responsibility to make sure they are meeting.

Nominations - Panel members were asked to send nominations to Lina via mail or email.

The Panel discussed whether the Panel meetings should be held as one or two-day meetings. It was suggested to try a one-day meeting format. It was also suggested that the Panel find out why members are not able to come to the meetings. The entire effectiveness of the Panel is based on attendance. Mike Hanrahan also indicated that the Panel would be enforcing the attendance bylaws.

Mike Hanrahan adjourned meeting at 3:15 p.m. Subcommittees will meet immediately following adjournment to define their purpose, develop initial work plans, and prepare an initial report.

Friday, April 4:
Members Present

Dennis Gragg	Ray Wicks	Dan Colgan
Eileen Huth	Lynda Roberts	Stephen Viola
Pam Walls	Melodie Friedebach	Joan Zavitsky
Kent Kolaga	Cathy Meyer	Deana O'Brien

DESE Staff Present
Debby Parsons

Members Not Present

Pat Jackson
Janet Jacoby
Eric Remelius
Joe Sartorius
Barbara Scheidegger

Dennis Von Allmen
Trish Grassa
Steve McDannold
Sandra Levels
Scott Mantooth

Patti Simcosky
Richard Staley
Mike Hanrahan

Call to Order - Kent Kolaga called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Formal Recommendations

#1 (formatting the performance report) – SIG committee reviewed DESE’s response and subsequent reports and announced that they have met the recommendations of the Panel. Motion by Eileen Huth indicating that Formal Recommendation #1 has been finalized. Joan Zavitsky seconded motion. Motion passed.

#3 (pending - awaiting response from DESE)

#4 DESE attached a copy of the amendments to the State Plan. The SIG committee reported that they felt DESE’s response to the SIG amendment meets the recommendations of the Panel. Motion by Ray Wicks indicating that Formal Recommendation #4 has been finalized. Dennis Gragg seconded motion. Motion passed.

#5 DESE attached a copy of the amendment to the State Plan. The SIG committee reported that they felt that DESE’s response to the SIG amendment meets the recommendations of the Panel. Motion by Ray Wicks indicating that Formal Recommendation #5 has been finalized. Dan Colgan seconded motion. Motion passed.

#6 - This was from the February Panel meeting. Kent Kolaga felt that there was something missing in the wording and would talk with Joe Sartorius for further clarification.

Dan Colgan made a motion that the Panel should go on record as recommending that DESE and the State legislature should pursue the forty percent funding from the federal government that was guaranteed for students with disabilities. Richard Staley seconded motion. Motion passed. This will be formal recommendation #7. Kent Kolaga will draft the formal recommendation and will email to Dan Colgan for his review.

Formal recommendations will be on the agenda for each meeting to review their status.

Standing Committees

Rules and Regulations - Dan reported that the purpose is to (1) review any rule changes in special education proposed by DESE; (2) review current rules and regulations when appropriate making suggestions for change; and (3) provide a forum for panel members so that they can be kept abreast of special education proposed bills.

Work plan – will include (1) identify two or three issues that need immediate consideration; (2) develop a do’s and don’t list for the panel members defining the individual’s role when communicating with legislators, educational agencies, and others while recognizing one’s self as a panel member; (3) reviewing the proposed changes to the Missouri State Plan and report findings to the Panel.

Melodie Friedebach indicated OSEP would be contacting DESE on Monday regarding the proposed changes.

Membership – would like to see that the membership be more diverse in regard to reflecting panel membership – including parents, administrators, teachers, other department representatives.

Evaluation - Lynda Roberts indicated that their purpose is to (1) ensure that evaluations and collection of data are appropriate and complete as directed by the Panel and OSEP (data watchers); (2) ensure that decisions are data based; (3) track the improvement plan (CIMP); and (4) prepare the SEAP annual report.

Initial work plan – (still open at this time)

Monitoring - Cathy Meyer indicated that their purpose is to (1) review statewide monitoring data trends; (2) review corrective action plans (CAP) and improvement plans (IP) submitted to OSEP; (3) review MSIP cycle plans; (4) review due process and child complaint results.

Work Plan - includes looking at trends and reports over the next six months. June meeting would include addressing the Panel on the IP information (due to OSEP July 1). The following meeting would be to look at the monitoring state data/results (obtain from Pam Williams). The fall meeting would be to review child complaints and due process information.

Pam Williams will generate and provide state level reports after the first of July for this subcommittee. Joan Zavitsky suggested that the subcommittee may want to review how the MSIP process is working and if there could be some changes. There have been a lot of changes so far in the MSIP process – how is the process working now, other changes needed, etc.

Programs - Dennis Gragg indicated that the purpose is to (1) provide panel input to the Effective Practices (EP) Section of DESE/DSE: to act as an advisory board in the development of initiatives rather than just to the finished products.

Work Plan – establish communication with staff in the EP section to determine what they are needing advice or input on. Is there some background information from DESE to help prepare the subcommittee on some of the different programs/projects that are going on? The EP section could prioritize the items they would like assistance with and provide some feedback about those programs to the subcommittee for their review.

SIG - Kent Kolaga indicated that this grant would run for one additional year. After some discussion about this committee, Dan Colgan made a motion to merge the entire responsibility of SIG into the Program Committee. Deana O'Brien seconded. Motion passed.

Kent Kolaga indicated that Mike Hanrahan is making it a requirement that every panel member serve on at least one committee. Kent will work with Lina Browner to prepare a synopsis of each committee and will send to each of the panel members. Panel members will be given the opportunity to volunteer for a committee or will be assigned by Mike.

Kent Kolaga indicated that Mike Hanrahan dissolved the previous committees. The new committees will be expected to work between each regular Panel meeting and will report at each Panel meeting their recommendations and/or progress. These meetings can be in person, by conference call, or by email. Committees will also be given time to meet during a portion of the regularly scheduled Panel meetings. The commitment to this Panel does not end when meetings are adjourned; it continues between meetings also.

Panel members must volunteer for one of the four subcommittees and the Executive committee will discuss membership for the Nominations committee. They will take into consideration the size and makeup of each committee.

It was suggested that the Panel chair develop a list of rules for the subcommittee sub chairs by the end of April. This information will be sent to the panel members so each person can determine if they want to be a sub chair (also need to have a vice sub chair appointed for each subcommittee).

SEAP Membership Issues - Termination of membership - Mike Hanrahan will develop a questionnaire for members who are not attending regularly and will receive feedback from them. The survey will be sent to all having attendance issues. The Panel is balanced as far as statewide representation. It was suggested that the attendance list be sent out with the minutes each time.

Kent Kolaga handed out, for the Panel to review, draft information concerning what is expected of a panel member. Send comments to Kent. This information could then be posted on the Panel's web page. It was suggested that the

wording might say “at least four meetings per year including standing committee work for xx number of hours.” Might also indicate that conference calls, email, etc. could be used instead of actual meetings for the subcommittees and that most Panel meetings are in JC. Compensation (change word to reimbursement) could be more defined – could use the information from the DESE expense account instruction sheet.

Eileen Huth asked the Panel if someone could move from one role to another within the panel (she was wanting to know if she could switch to the teacher position). Melodie Friedebach indicated that this is possible. The Panel also discussed dual membership which is defined as someone who serves in one role but could also serve in another role. Several parents serving on the Panel have expressed concern that people filling parent positions on the Panel could also serve in the role of teacher or school administrator. The nominating committee needs to be aware of this issue and could possibly identify some parents that are not serving dual roles. Dan Colgan indicated that it may not be an issue of the Panel as a whole but it is an issue for some. Kent Kolaga suggested that the Panel not take action at this time. The Panel could discuss at a future meeting and better define the questions and then could contact OSEP for clarification.

Assistive Technology (AT) Update (Deana O’Brien) – Deana O’Brien indicated that she was uncomfortable with the First Steps listserve message that went out from DESE on December 19, 2002, regarding assistive technology (handout). She indicated that she forwarded the message to the Director of the Assistive Technology Project and she responded that they took exception that there was no list. Deana handed out information on OSEP’s policy addressing First Steps. Deana indicated that the problem is the way the message was written, that it infers that the team should not recommend anything that is not on the list. Deana is concerned that the list is going to stifle the discussion at IFSP meetings. OSEP has never officially defined this issue and the Missouri AT wants to get a definitive interpretation of the law. Deana indicated that she just wanted to give make the Panel aware of this issue. Kent indicated that it appears this is not just a First Steps issue but also an issue for school-age children. A message with further explanation could be sent by DESE regarding the list of exclusions.

Debby Parsons indicated that DESE talked with OSEP before sending the message on the First Steps listserve and they had no concerns with the message. She also indicated that DESE would be resending the message including some additional clarification.

Lynda Roberts indicated that when offenders are brought in to a DOC facility, they cannot bring hearing aids, glasses, etc., they are instead provided by the institution (CMS). Offenders are only given what they need. Lynda and Debby Parsons will discuss this more at a later time.

Public Comment Discussion – In the past time there had been time set aside on each agenda for public comments. It was dropped from the agenda because no one was showing up to make public comments. It was suggested that the Panel put guidelines on the web for making a public comment at a Panel meeting.

Nomination Committee (Scott Mantoath, chair) - Kent indicated that the executive committee discussed that the nominations committee only had one purpose and that they were going to expand their responsibilities to include reviewing applications for Panel members and to do recruiting activities to assist in filling vacancies on the Panel. They could also talk with potential members about the responsibilities of the Panel and what is expected of members.

Member Reports - Melodie Friedebach indicated that Rick Hutcherson would be retiring May 31. Dale Carlson, who is currently the Director of School Finance, will be taking his position effective June 1.

Future Meeting Dates - Need to set the next meeting following the June meeting. The June meeting is a two-day meeting. Does the Panel want to stay with that format or change to a one-day meeting? Agendas need to create interest in Panel members so they will make every effort to be present at meetings. It is the consensus of the panel that the chair set the meeting following the June meeting. June agenda items include Improvement Plans (reports from committees) and budget status.

Adjournment - Cathy Meyer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Eileen Huth seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.